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Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7231
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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: AIDAC, FODAG
SUBJECT: FAO/FERC DELEGATION ROUNDUP REPORT

REF: KUALA LUMPUR 8025, KUALA LUMPUR 8026, KUALA LUMPUR 8089,
STATE 194333

1. SUMMARY. WHILE UNDULY DRAWN OUT, IN TYPICAL UN FASHION,
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AND PLENARY SESSIONS SERVED TO PROVIDE
VEHCILES FOR A MORE USEFUL DIALOGUE, PARTICULARLY IN CORRIDORS
AND OTHER PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS, THAN MANY UN MEETINGS, PROBABLY DUE
TO RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES AND
RESPONSIBLE LEVEL OF INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS. EMPHASIS
GIVEN-UNDER LEADERSHIP OF REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE UMALI AND
SUPPORTED BY DG-TO MEETING NEEDS OF SMALL FARMER, INCLUDING
TENANT, SHARE CROPPER, LANDLESS AGRICULTURAL WORKER, SMALL
FISHERMAN AND FORESTRY WORKER-THE RURAL POOR-
ILLUSTRATE USEFUL STRENGTHENING OF TREND TOWARD "HUMAN NEEDS"
APPROACH IN FAO AND PERHAPS OTHER UN OPERATIONS. GENERAL
AGREEMENT AND SUBSEQUENT RATIFICATION BY ELEVEN COUNTRY
DELEGATIONS ON ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CENTER FOR INTEGRATED RURAL
DEVELOPMENT (CIRDAP) INDICATIVE OF THIS TREND. TACTICAL MISHANDLING
SPOILED WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A REMARKABLY IMPORTANT SECRETARIAT
INTITIATIVE IN LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR A "KUALA LUMPUR
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COMMITMENT TO ACTION" IN ASIA AND THE FAR EAST WITH REGARD TO
AGRARIAN REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT; AND, IN TURN, A DRAMTIC
KICK OFF TOWARD THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON AGRARIAN REFORM AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT (WCARRD) NEXT YEAR. THROUGHOUT, USDEL MAINTAINED
LOW PROFILE BUT PROJECTED U.S. PRESENCE AND INTEREST IN REGARD
PARTICULARLY THROUGH TWO RELATIVELY BRIEF U.S. STATEMENTS; ONE
ON AGRARIAN REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT PRESENTED DURING TECHNICAL

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COMMITTEE MEETING; THE SECOND, A GENERAL STATEMENT PRESENTED IN THE PLENARY; BOTH WELL RECEIVED AND SUBSEQUENTLY FAVORABLY COMMENTED UPON.

2. RURAL POOR POLICY/PROGRAM BIAS. PERVASIVE THROUGHOUT BOTH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AND PLENARY SESSIONS, IN DISCUSSION OF ALL AGENDA ITEMS, WAS WHAT DELEGATION SENSES IS SIGNIFICANT SHIFT TOWARD CONCERN FOR, (IF NOT YET COMMITMENT TO COME FULLY TO GRIPS WITH) PROBLEMS OR RURAL POOR. STATEMENTS IN BOTH SESSIONS INDICATED ACCELERATING LEVEL OF SENSITIVITY, KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF PROBLEMS NOT SEEN PREVIOUSLY BY MEMBERS OF U.S. DELEGATION IN FAO AND OTHER UN FORA NOT ONLY IN DISCUSSION OF AGRARIAN REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT WHERE SUBJECT MIGHT BE INTERPRETED AS THETORIC BUT IN DISCUSSION OF FAO PROGRAM/BUDGET FOR THE REGION AND CIRDAP, ALSO, FOR EXAMPLE, IN DISCUSSION OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT FOR AGRICULTURE, AND OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (RCDC). MOST COUNTRIES MADE STATEMENTS WHICH SOUNDED AS THOUGH THEY WERE COMMETTED; YET WHEN SECRETARIAT DRAFT "COMMITMENT" FINALLY EMERGED, TOO LATE IN OUR JUDGMENT FOR SERIOUS CONSIDERATION, THEY MADE A FAST RETREAT FROM COMMITMENTS TO AGRARIAN REFORMS (SEE "KUALA LUMPUR COMMITMENT" BELOW). MOST IMPORTANT U.S. CONTRIBUTION PROBABLY RELATED TO SUGGESTION MADE IN BOTH U.S. STATEMENTS AND PROPOSED AS ADDITION TO REPORTOF TECHNICAL COMMITTEE, WITH SLIGHT OPPOSITION BUT OVERRIDING APPROVAL OF MOST IF NOT ALL OTHER DELEGATIONS, BOTH IN TECHNICAL AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PLENARY SESSIONS, THAT "A REORIENTATION OF EXTERNAL RESOURCES IN FAVOR OF THE RURAL POOR IS NOT LIKELY TO BE VERY EFFECTIVE UNLESS, WHERE NECESSARY, DOMESTIC POLICIES, INCLUDING POLICIES AFECTING LAND TENURE, ARE ORIENTED IN THE SAME DEIRECTION." THE POINT WAS MOST FULLY ELABORATED IN GENERAL U.S. STATEMENT IN PLENARY.

3. CIRDAP.

MORE UNEXPECTED EVEN THAN THE STRONG SHIFT TOWARD POLICY/PROGRAM BIASES TOWARD HELP FOR THE RURAL POOR WAS THE WELL ORGANIZED SECRETARIAT MOBILIZATION OF SUPPORT FOR CIRDAP. PROBABLY STEMMING FROM A CONSCIOUS LDC REGIONAL SNUB OF THE GENEROUS JAPANESE OFFER OF SEVERAL YEARS STANDING TO FINANCE THE FIRST-YEAR'S OPERATIONAL COSTS OF CIRDAP AND A SENSE OF OBLIGATION TO RALLY AROUND BANGLADESH'S INITIATIVES AMD COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE A DESERVING HOSPITABLE HOME FOR IT AT COMILLA, THIRTEEN COUNTRIES ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED IN THE PLENIPOTENTIARY SESSION; ELEVEN AGREED TO ITS ESTABLISHMENT; AND NINE, SO FAR, HAVE SIGNED. MODE OF SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CIRDAP, FUNDING ASSESSMENTS, AND PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES WERE MOST EXTENSIVELY DEBATED. IN USDEL'S VIEW, CAREFUL CONSIDERATION

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OF POSSIBLE WAYS TO COOPERATE/COLLABORATE WITH CIRDAP SEEMS INDICATED. (INITIALLY, PERHAPS, BEST ROUTE MIGHT BE TO BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT USEFUL PROGRAMS AND FOR PROJECTS EMERGING FROM INSTITUTE, RATHER THAN INSTITUTION PER SE. FOR THIS USDEL URGES APPROPRIATE PROVISIONS IN AID REGIONAL AND OTHER ANNUAL BUDGET SUBMISSION.)

4. "KUALA LUMPUR COMMITMENT". SECRETARIAT (MAINLY UMALI AND ISLAM) LAUNCHED THE SECRETARIAT'S MOST IMPORTANT INITIATIVE IN COMPOSING AND PASSING TO A WORKING GROUP, CHAIRED BY LEVISTE (PHILLIPPINE), THE "KUALA LUMPUR COMMITMENT TO ACTION" (SEE REFTELS). CLEARLY INTENDED TO STIMULATE MOMENTUM TOWARD ACTION PROGRAM FOR WCARRD, SECRETARIAT DROPPED BALL BY FAILING TO PULL TOGETHER ITS ACT IN TIME TO PRESENT DRAFT AT OUTSET OF TECHNICAL
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COMMITTEE MEETING. BECAUSE INITIATIVE WAS DELAYED UNTIL SECOND DAY OF MINISTERIAL PLENARY, LEAVING LITTLE TIME FOR CONSIDERATION AND GUIDANCE FROM CAPITALS, AND BECAUSE OF FAILURE TO ENSURE THAT MALAYSIA (THE HOST COUNTRY) AND PLENARY CHAIRMAN HAD A

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PROMINENT ROLE LAUNCHING THE "COMMITMENT", THE INITIATIVE ABORTED AS ASEAN ALLIES QUICKLY RALLIED OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP TO MOVE TO MORE COMFORTABLE POSITION OF POSTPONEMENT OF ACTION TO WCARRD.

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5. WCARRD. WHILE THE SUBJECT MATTER AND RELATED ISSUES OF WCARRD WERE THE FOCUS OF MOST OF THE DISCUSSION, IN BOTH THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AND PLENARY SESSIONS, ONLY PASSING REFERENCES WERE MADE TO PREPARATIONS AND CONDUCT OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE ITSELF. FROM CORRIDOR AND OTHER PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS,HOWEVER, AND IN DISCUSSION OF OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON "KUALA LUMPUR COMMITMENT", USDEL GAINED CLAR IMPRESSION THAT WCARRD IS BEING TAKEN VERY SERIOUSLY BY COUNTRIES IN THIS REGION. MUCH OF DISCUSSION OF "COMMITMENT" BY SOME DELEGATES AND SECRDTARIAT WAS CAST IN TERMS OF THE "COMMITMENT" BEING SEEN AS THE MAJOR KICK OFF FOR THE WCARRD, IN OTHER REGIONS AS WELL. WHILE NOT ACTED UPON AT THE CONFERENCE, THE SUBSTANTIVE CONTEXT AND ISSUES RAISED BY THE "COMMITMENT"INITIATIVE ARE EXPECTED TO RECEIVE SERIOUS ATTENTION BY GOVERNMENTS IN PREPARATION FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE.

6. TCDC. TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (TCDC) WAS DISCUSSED AS A SUBJECT OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE IN THIS CONFERENCE. THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT TCDC IS OF CONSIDERABLE VALUE AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

SHOULD GROW IN IMPORTANCE IN THE REGION. MANY COUNTRIES OFFERED AREAS OF EXPERTISE THAT COULD BE SHARED WITH OTHERS. A RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED DURING THE CONFERENCE INVITING THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES OF THE REGION TO "INTENSIFY THEIR MUTUAL COOPERATION", DETERMINE INSTITUTIONS SUITABLE FOR TCDC OPERATIONS, AND MOBILIZE FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR ACCELERATION OF TCDC. IT ALSO REQUESTED DG TO BECOM ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN PROMOTING TCDC WITHIN THE REGION. THE FAO REGIONAL OFFICE IN BANGKOK WILL BE COUNTED UPON HEAVILY BY MEMBER COUNTRIES FOR SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE IN TCDC OPERATIONS.

7. ISSUE OF BUDGETARY SIGNIFICANCE. WHILE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT IDENTIFIES A NUMBER OF ISSUES ON WHICH MEMBER STATES WISHED MORE EMPHASIS, THERE WERE NO SPECIFIC CALLS FOR AN INCREASE OF FAO EXPENDITURE. CONFERENCE CAM ECLOSEST TO THIS IN LANGUAGE OF TCP, WHICH NUMEROUS DELEGATES PRAISED AND SEVERAL FEL HAD SLIGHTED ASIAN AND PACIFIC AREA. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORTED "A STRON GREQUEST WAS MADE FOR INCREASED COMMITMENT TO TCP PROJECTS FOR THE REGION". UNDER JANPANESE QUESTIONING, THIS EXPLAINED AS MEANING GREATER PERCENTAGE GOING TO ASIA AND PACIFIC. CONFERENCE RESOLUTION ON TCP ASKED FOR "URGES ALL MEMBER GOVERNMENTS TO ASSURE ADEQUATE FINANCIAL PROVISION FOR THIS PROGRAMME IN FUTURE PROGRAMMES AT WORK AND BUDGETS OF FAO TO ALLOW IT WITHIN ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE TO MEET THE EXPANDING REQUIREMENTS OF THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION." HOWEVER, USDEL SUCCEEDED IN ADDING PREAMBEL "HAVING IN MIND THAT THE COUNCIL WILL BE REVIEWING THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE PROGRAMME AT ITS 72ND SESSION;" TO POINT UP FACT THAT TERMS OF REFERENCE SUBJECT TO REVIEW.

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8. PROMOTION OF FOOD SECURITY WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON POST-
HARVEST LOSSES(PHL). THE SUBJECT
RECEIVED SOLID VOLA SUPPORT FROM 20 MEMBER DELEGATES IN THE
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE DISCUSSION INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES.
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A RESOLUTION ADOPTED DURING THE PLENARY SESSION REQUESTED THAT
FAO'S INVOLVEMENT IN PHL CONTINUE TO EXPAND AND THAT FAO"COORDINATE
ITS EFFORTS UNDER THE POST-HARVEST LOSSES FUND, THE FOOD SECURITY
ASSISTANCE SCHEME, AND THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME".

9. COMMUNIST STATES WERE RELATIVELY SUBDUED PARTICIPANTS IN
BOTH SESSIONS BUT WERE SUPPORTIVE OF FAO PROGRAMS. MONGOLIA AND
DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA WERE NOT REPRESENTED. PRC, DPRK, LAOS,
VIETNAM ALL MADE BRIEF REMARKS IN TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AND COUNTRY
STATEMENTS IN PLENARY BUT DID NOT ATTEMPT TO DISCUSS OR AMEND
REPORTS OR RESOLUTIONS. COUNTRY STATEMENTS STUCK FAILY CLOSE
TO SUBSTANCE ALTHOUGH DPRK TOOK A PASSING SHOT AT "U.S. IMPERIALISM"
AND PRC CASTIGATED TRANSNATIONALS, UNFAIR TERMS OF COMMODITY
TRADE, AND JOINT VENTURES IMPOSED BY UNNAMED SUPERPOWERS.

10. AMONG DELEGATIONS FROM CAPITALS ATTENDING CONFERENCE FOR
THE FIRST TIME, USDEL FOUND LITTLE FAMILIARITY WITH FAO ACTIVITIES
IN THEIR OWN COUNTRIES. OBVIOUSLY, INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES AND
BILATERAL PROGRAMS WITH SUBSTANTIAL LEVEL OF FUNDS COMMANDED
MORE OF THEIR ATTNETION. HOWEVER, SEVERAL INDENTICAL POINTS
AT WHICH FAO PROGDE USEFUL COUNSEL ON RECRUITMENT OF
CONSULTANTS FOR RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

11. IN JUDGEMENT OF USDEL, OUTCOME OF CONFERENCE DID NOT
WARRANT TWO WEEKS SPENT. THREE DAYS OF TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
AND TWO OF PLENARY WOULD, IN USDEL VIEW, HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT
AND ALTHOUGH STRAIN ON SECRETARIAT WOULD HAVE BEEN GREATER,
PRINCIPALS WOULD HAVE HAD ONE MORE WEEK TO SPEND, HOPEFULLY
ON FOOD PRODUCTION AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT SUCH A SESSION
MIGHT BE CONFINED TO REVIEW AND PROJECTION OF FAO REGIONAL
PROGRAM AND ONE OTHER KEY ISSUE ON WHICH DELEGATIONS COULD
COME EQUIPPED WITH EXPERTS FOR TECHNICAL COMMITTEE.

12. USDEL RECEIVED STRONGLY FAVORABLE IMPRESSION OF RURAL
DEVELOPMENT VILLAGE LEVEL PROBLEM IDENTIFYING AND PROBLEM
SOLVING WORKSHOP FAO REGIONAL OFFICE STRONGLY PROMOTING.
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THIS WAS DESCRIBED IN SLIDE-ILLUSTRATED PRESENTATION TO
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AND IN FULLER DETAIL TO USDEL BY ITS

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ORGINATOR. (BAKER PLANS REVIEW ITS EFFECT IN NEPAL.)

13. FINAL REFLECTION: BASED ON DEPARTMENT'S TIMELY RESPONSE ON DRAFT "KUALA LUMPUR COMMITMENT," USDEL WAS SPARED AN AWKWARD SITUATION WHEN DRAFT SET ASIDE.U.S. PROBLEMS WITH FINAL SECTION COULD PROBABLY HAVE BEEN HANDLED BY SOME JUDICIOUS WORDING MAKING IT EVEN CLEARER THAT REALLOCATION OF EXTERNAL AID SOURCES RATHER THAN NET INCREASE INVOLVED. MORE SERIOUS IS SITUATION, APPARENT IN REFTEL,WE ARE IN THE PACIFIC ISLAND TERRITORIES AND TRUST. IF OUR PLANS AND PERFORMANCE THERE DO NOT REFLECT THE KIND OF POLITICAL WILL TOWARD RURAL POOR WE ARE URGING ON OTHERS, WE NEED TO UPGRADE THE FORMER PROMPTLY OR CUT DOWN OUR RHETORIC.
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